

Forest Management

GRADES 6–8

Guiding Question

How does forest management ensure that forests provide benefits for humans, ecosystems, and wildlife into the future?

Connecting Concepts

- Ecosystems are dynamic in nature; their characteristics can vary over time. Disruptions to any physical or biological component of an ecosystem can lead to shifts in all its populations. (NGSS, LS2.C: Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience)
- Changes in biodiversity can influence the resources available to humans, such as food, energy, and medicines, as well as ecosystem services on which humans rely—for example, water purification and recycling. (NGSS, LS4.D: Biodiversity and Humans)
- Human activities have significantly altered the biosphere, damaged and destroyed natural habitats, and caused the extinction of other species. Environmental change can have different impacts (negative and positive) for different living things. (NGSS, ESS3.C: Human Impacts on Earth Systems)
- The type and intensity of forest management depends on the landowner, objectives, and forest type. Examples of management objectives might include conservation, recreation (e.g., hiking, hunting), or profit. (PLT FLF, 3.B.2; see related FLF Concepts 3.B.4 and 3.C.3)
- People have differing perspectives about forest management that can be affected by politics, science, economics, values, perception, culture, and experience. (PLT FLF, 3.D.1)

Scope and Sequence

The collection and order of content below supports an intentional student learning progression.

Activity	Description
Forest in the City	Students conduct a survey to investigate the social and psychological effects of the urban forest.
Trees in Trouble	Students examine trees for signs of damage or poor health and investigate conditions that may cause trees and other plants to become unhealthy.
Invasive Species	Students research invasive species to determine what characteristics make their control so challenging.
Living with Fire	Students learn about the three elements a fire needs to burn and find out how this “fire triangle” can be used to prevent and manage wildland fires.
If You Were the Boss	Students play the role of forest manager for a public forest, exploring the complex factors that influence management decisions about forest lands.
Our Federal Forests	Students identify ways that people use forest resources and explore how forests are managed to satisfy a variety of human and environmental needs.
What’s in a Label?	Students explore criteria for forest certification and consider possible benefits and limitations of certification.

See plt.org/academic-standards for detailed standards correlations for each activity.

Storyline

Students explore forest management as a way to ensure that forests remain sustainable and provide the most benefits.

Storyline continued on next page.



Forest Management (cont.)

GRADES 6–8

- Begin with the activity Forest in the City, in which students learn about some of the ways that trees and forests benefit communities. They may design their own survey or use the survey instrument provided to identify the benefits of trees and forests.
- The next three activities—Trees in Trouble, Invasive Species, and Living with Fire—invite students to explore specific aspects of forest management: tree health, control of invasive species, and management of wildland fires, respectively.
- Next, use the activity If You Were the Boss to give students practice in making a management plan for a forest. Challenge them to determine which of the group’s plans provides the most benefits for all.
- Then, use the activity Our Federal Forests to further their understanding of how forest managers work to satisfy a variety of human and environmental needs.
- Conclude the unit with the activity What’s in a Label?, in which students explore forest product certification as one tool for ensuring that forests are managed sustainably. Ask students to articulate how forest certification and forest management benefit forests and people.

